

MASSACHUSETTS FARMER.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, FOR THE BENEFIT OF FARMERS AND MECHANICS, AT QUINCY HALL, SOUTH MARKET STREET—WM. BUCKMINSTER, OF FRAMINGHAM, EDITOR.

VOL. 7.

BOSTON, SATURDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 30, 1847.

NO. 5.

PUBLISHED BY
WILLIAM BUCKMINSTER,

TERMS: \$2.00 in advance; if payment is delayed until the 1st of January, \$2.50 will be charged. No paper sent for a term less than six months. All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor at Boston. Advertising on reasonable terms.

AGRICULTURE.

FARM WORK FOR NOVEMBER.

The closing month is at hand, and farmers must be busy and make the scattering that escaped in October. November is often pleasant and free from storms, but we must not trust this month. The fifteenth is the turning point in the season, and he who risks his crops in the ground after this time, must not complain if he is obliged to wait for them till April.

Potatoes should not remain in the hill another year, for since it has become fashionable to haul up to earth around the vines, the frost often finds the upper sides and bites.

Corn will now be more secure in barns and racks than in the field, provided the bins are not too close with boards or boards that are matched.

Round turnips are sweeter and better for remaining in the ground quite late; yet when the tops of the turnips are wanted for cattle it is good husbandry to pull a portion of the crop before it has been growing. The tops are valuable for all kinds of stock, and they are better than English hay to feed stock.

Pumpkins are richer than turnips and make better beef. Now save the seeds of the sweetest and best for next year. Thanksgiving is not well kept in New England without a supply of pumpkins.

Peas from pumpkins are less dangerous than pieces of wood and nails.

The wood pile is an important affair with all housekeepers. A good supply of dry combustible material for heating in a cold morning, is a luxury which all who have the means do not sufficiently prize.

Breakfast will often be late without dry wood, and the cook will not be good satisfied if she does not have the wood to dry on the fire. Pick up the scattered limbs before the snow comes.

"Gather all the fragments that nothing be lost." Sticks may be dug, and stone walls may be built now as well as at any season. When they are to be laid but a short distance it is not necessary to wait for snow; a flat stone is best to lay them on, and some labor is saved by hauling, and laying up the wall at the same time. Dig no trenches for walls deep enough for the water to stand in, unless you wish to have your fence shaken by the spring freshets.

Cattle must be fed from the barn before this month closes, and cows will give more milk through the month by being tied in barns through the night. Cows must have attention in the fore part of winter, for they are not accustomed to make their meals on hay. As spring approaches they will need less care than when first taken from pasturing. Turnips or root crops may be given to them daily to keep them down, and all the rotten hay should be saved for them.

The breaking of young cattle and colts requires skill, judgment, patience; and boys must not be entrusted with this business in the outset. Leisure may be found in November to yoke and handle the young lads; and the boys may learn how the thing should be done, provided their parents know, and will let them an example of patience.

The winter schools should commence early and the children should all be made to attend as long as the school lasts. Nothing but actual sickness should furnish a plea for absence. Children learn something at school in relation to literature and manners whether they incline to do it or not. The most idle and stupid are improved by being compelled to attend where lessons are recited, and where some of the school will occasionally exhibit good manners.

BREAKING STEERS.

This branch of farming is often entrusted to boys, who are not competent to the task. Men, who have full strength and judgment to control them when they are first put to the yoke, are required to manage them for a time, if they would have them contented and obedient, or vicious.

First yoking a pair of steers we have found it most convenient to have them in a pen, or in a corner of the barn, tied to fifteen feet in breadth. As soon as one is yoked fasten the yoke tight to prevent him from running off with it and becoming scared while you are catching the other. Bring them together and tie the yoke to the post so that they will be forced to follow each other.

Now yoke them, and be careful that the near eye does not break away from you. For if he does he will have a right to say he cannot do it, and you may catch him again if you can. Let him know that he has a regular discharge by your consent and he knows of his submission. The next day you may then be gently led and permitted to join his mate.

Open the stable door and let them walk out at leisure. They are now more than half convinced that you did not intend to kill, or to punish them. Next day drive them in again, and put the yoke on as before; let them eat something a little richer than they usually eat; handle them and talk to them plainly, in good English—for all our cattle think the English language is plainer than French gibberish. Now unchain the yoke and standing close by the high steer drive them about the pen a few times.

One may now open the door—it should be a wide one—and drive them down the courtyard, taking particular care to keep the control and not let them break or break from you. Have a small birch stick in hand, with twigs on it, to stop them or to start them. A slight switching on their rumps will be sufficient to make them move forward, provided you are not in too great haste to make them mind you.

When you and they are tired, drive them back again into the stable or pen and yoke them there as before. After a very few yokings in this way you will be able to put the yoke on in the yard, and without any danger of one's running away with the yoke rattling about him.

The next business is to teach them to draw. This is done without much trouble when you have seen that they may be put with them. Let them be put on forward of the oxen and let the horse lead them, or a second yoke of oxen. The steers will soon learn to keep the track and carry their loads up. They move better without a rope on their horns than when one, and you will have no need to use one when they are thus placed. They will now learn to draw and to let you come near them without holding their horns. They may be used in the plough team, or on the highway, where the team should be often made to stop at the word "whoa," spoken distinctly.

The next stage in training is to teach the steers to draw a load alone, and to haul, gear, and back, at the word of command. A rope may be used on the horns for a short time, but a first rate teamster will drop a young pair without a rope on their horns. Should they pull off their horns from the horse, chase them and whip them for it, but, once they back, and they will soon find there is no advantage gained by hauling off from the driver. Whipping does no good in such cases, for it never follows the offence so closely as to let the animals know why they are whipped.

When steers have learned to draw a suitable load alone, to depend on their own strength in the draft and to haul or come to you, on the motion of your whip, you will want to teach them to back, in a scientific manner. Backing is seldom taught correctly. Passionate drivers expect cattle to run a load back without having first been taught to back empty carts.

If you would have your cattle learn this art, put them on an empty cart and let them back it down hill. Never pound their noses, for this gives them pain and wens, and makes them hold their heads down to avoid your blows. In such a position of the head the ox has no power over the yoke, for his throat is brought to bear on the lower part of the yoke, and he cannot do much for himself.

By all means keep his head up, and then the yoke itself will bear against the upper side of the neck—the tough side—and against the horns. If you use a stick or whip, touch the fore legs with it; keep your stick under, and your steers will not put their heads down to come in the way of it. At first they will refuse to back backwards, and will stride away from the cart tongue in order to go side ways and see where they are to stop.

But while the cart is drawing them back it will be your principal business to keep the steers in line, that they make tracks after the cart. Be patient now, the cart is helping you, and the steers will soon choose to go backwards after the cart rather than to stand still and hold it. In a short time they will learn to step backwards and keep their bodies close to the tongue, with their heads up. Soon you will teach them to run an empty cart back on level ground; and eventually your cattle will run back any decent load with nearly as much ease as they will draw it forward.

Mr. Jonathan Rice of Marlborough recently told us he taught his steers to back by hitching them to a rock in front of them, and then inviting them to back away from the rock, making them haul it after them and endeavor to avoid it as it comes along. He says they will hold up their heads and pull stoutly to get away from their load in front. We have no doubt this is a good mode of using cattle to run a load back.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SWAMP LANDS, MODES OF SUBDUEING.

MR. EDITOR—Enclosed is Three Dollars which you will please pass to my credit, and continue to send your paper—I like its open and fearless course with regard to slavery and all its consequent evils—and I hope that portion of the Ploughman which is thus devoted to the moral, social and political reform of the country, will not be retrenched in the least.

I have a farm in the south part of New Hampshire, (Lyndeboro') with an upland soil naturally bearing the Oak, Ash, Beech, White Birch, Hickory and a few hard Pines—which I mention to give you an idea of the nature of the soil. I have also on the same farm 25 or 30 acres of swamp or bog meadow land, naturally producing Alder, White Maple, (Soft Maple) and the common variety of swamps grasses. It has a clear vegetable soil averaging at least 6 feet in depth, resting upon hard pan subsoil, which I have not yet examined, but an old, black, and a few hard Pines—formerly been dug about the margin of the meadow.

Now, Mr. Editor, I wish to reclaim this meadow from its present state of wild grasses, to utilize land and upland grasses (say herdsgrass and red top.) Can it be done, and how? I shall be glad to do it, in cheapest and yet most effectual way.

I have thought of ditching and cross ditching through to the hard pan, and carrying the contents to the barn-yard, to be used as any upland in connection with common manure. This is an old worn out field of about 15 acres covered with rubble stone which I propose to fill my ditches with—making what I believe is called White Mud, and as a top dressing for grass land; then cut back sand or gravel and seed down. This must necessarily involve a good deal of labor and expense—can I do it any easier, cheaper or better? I should like to see again your opinion or any remarks you may make on the subject.

Respectfully yours, L. A. LUCAS.
Proctorville, Vt., Oct. 20th, 1847.

Mr. Editor—Mixture of soils of different kinds are very generally beneficial. Peat mud on gravelly lands, and on sandy lands works quicker and better than it does on clayey soils, because it is softer decomposed, and because of the moisture that is long retained in such mud.

So on peat bogs we find that all sorts of highland soils are useful and operate permanently in producing crops. On dry peat bogs, heavy loams, and even clay, is useful to form a rich soil. On cold and wet meadows, gravelly loam is found a most excellent addition, as it warms the whole mass and affords the surplus moisture to drain off better than when sand or sandy loam is applied.

The trouble lies in the cost of carting large quantities of earth to form a good soil, and most farmers shrink from such a task. They would go for a soil ready made, rather than attempt to make it by their own hands. A good soil is a great advantage, and it is sufficient to make them move forward, provided you are not in too great haste to make them mind you.

When you and they are tired, drive them back again into the stable or pen and yoke them there as before. After a very few yokings in this way you will be able to put the yoke on in the yard, and without any danger of one's running away with the yoke rattling about him.

The next business is to teach them to draw. This is done without much trouble when you have seen that they may be put with them. Let them be put on forward of the oxen and let the horse lead them, or a second yoke of oxen. The steers will soon learn to keep the track and carry their loads up. They move better without a rope on their horns than when one, and you will have no need to use one when they are thus placed. They will now learn to draw and to let you come near them without holding their horns. They may be used in the plough team, or on the highway, where the team should be often made to stop at the word "whoa," spoken distinctly.

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By all means keep his head up, and then the yoke itself will bear against the upper side of the neck—the tough side—and against the horns. If you use a stick or whip, touch the fore legs with it; keep your stick under, and your steers will not put their heads down to come in the way of it. At first they will refuse to back backwards, and will stride away from the cart tongue in order to go side ways and see where they are to stop.

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remains forever to warm and to correct the acids of peat bottoms. On a great majority of our bogs or peat meadows gravelly loam proves to be the best kind of upland soil that has ever been applied.

Our correspondent can judge better as to the quality of his swamp land by digging and ditching a part of it, than we can by being told of the present growth upon it. The "valder and white maple" are found on all our swamp lands, and we cannot determine from these whether gravel or sandy loam would be the best material to be mixed with the surface soil.

The first business is draining. If the land is not well drained the English grasses cannot be expected to thrive. When a meadow abounds in springs the ditches should be cut within about four rods of each other, and they should run in parallel lines in order to facilitate the work of subduing, and so on. Should they pull off their horns from the horse, chase them and whip them for it, but, once they back, and they will soon find there is no advantage gained by hauling off from the driver. Whipping does no good in such cases, for it never follows the offence so closely as to let the animals know why they are whipped.

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some, still the disease is upon them. The rot has the appearance of iron ore, at the commencement just under the skin, and at last penetrates the whole potato. The red potatoes are the ones most touched, and the "cow hounds" and white the least.

G. W. DEAN.
South Plympton, Oct. 15th, 1847.

Plymouth Co. Cattle Show.
Continuation of the reports commenced last week and first published in the Old Colony Memorial.

On Stock.
There were eight milk cows entered for premium; also heifers having horns, and another lot of four bulls and eight heifer calves, from which we select and award the following premiums:

To Sidney Packard, East Bridgewater, 2nd best do. \$6.00—having given 326 lbs. in ten days in June, which made 12 3/4 lbs. butter—ten days in Sept. 21 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Oct. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Nov. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Dec. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Jan. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Feb. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in March 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in April 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in May 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in June 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in July 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Aug. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Sept. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Oct. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Nov. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Dec. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Jan. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Feb. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in March 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in April 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in May 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in June 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in July 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Aug. 14 1/2 lbs. butter—10 days in Sept. 14 1/2 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